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MUSEUM NEWS

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART
FOUNDED BY EDWARD DRUMMOND LIBBEY

NUMBER 98 TOLEDO, OHIO JUNE, 1942

THE EPIPHANY FERNANDO GALLEGO

GIFT OF EDWARD DRUMMOND LIBBEY

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EDITORIAL

WE HAVE always exercised economy in the operation of the Museum. We have tried in the past to make our economies invisible to our visitors. This can no longer be accomplished, so perhaps a word of explanation is in order.

For at least ten years we have had a declining income with which to meet increasing expenses. The investments from which we receive our spending money are restricted by law and by will to conservative and sound securities. Liberty bonds paid 4¼% interest and frequently could be had at a discount. Ohio municipals paid 4½%. Now Treasury bonds at best yield 2½% and Ohio municipals 1.60%. In other words, income from trust funds, not only for us, but for colleges, hospitals, libraries and other institutions, has been cut in half in the last ten years.

To help to bring our books into balance for the next season we have eliminated our short concert course. We propose not to open the main floor of the Museum at night, but to use the Grove Place entrance for our evening classes in the School. We will change our Sunday hours from 1 to 5 to 2 to 6, and hold our free concerts and recitals on Sunday at four o'clock instead of in the evenings. The only evening events, with the exception perhaps of one or two now planned which we may be unable to change, will be our major concerts. (Should there be blackouts, we would be unable to operate on the main floor, regardless of other reasons for not doing so.) We will be unable to extend the facilities of our dining room except for luncheons and teas which close before five

o'clock. We will be glad to conduct groups through the collections and exhibitions on Sunday afternoons if they cannot come on week-days, but we cannot offer them evening opportunities. We will not be able to let other organizations present recitals in the evenings, but will endeavor to accommodate them on Sundays.

Our attendance is in a substantial decline, due at least in part to the war. The reduced demand for our services will help us to effect some of the needed economies, for we can operate comfortably with a staff reduced by the draft.

We will expect our adult students to look after their own coats, hats and pocket books instead of checking them. We may ask them to do other little things for themselves which we have heretofore done for them.

Even so, we do not think anyone will be seriously inconvenienced, and we are sure that the Museum will still be a pleasant place to visit, and that among its treasures of past and present one may find solace of mind and spirit in a war-torn world.

AN EARLY CASTILIAN PAINTING

THE EPIPHANY acquired last year by the Toledo Museum of Art, an oil painting on panel, was first shown in the Barcelona Exposition of 1888 and later appeared in the Pacully Collection in Paris. Professor Post published it in his History of Spanish Painting, as the work of Fernando Gallego, a Spanish painter active in Castile during the last quarter of the fifteenth century.

The painting is a very colorful representation of the theme that plays such an important role in medieval iconography. At first glance it seems to be the usual representation of the Epiphany—three kings offer their gifts to the Child seated on the lap of the Virgin, with St. Joseph as the only witness to the scene. The action takes place on the porch of a ruined palace set in a picturesque landscape.

The picture is at once striking, however, not only for its beauty and brilliance, but for the careful execution of every detail. Features are very naturalistic, and the faces of the three kings show progressive excitement as, in turn, they approach the Christ Child. The kneeling old man, powerfully modelled, is a marvelous portrayal of religious fervor. The rather youthful features of the second king and the boyish aspect of the third are rendered with great mastery, proving that the author was both an excellent technician and a profound psychologist. The Virgin is not a pretty

LANDSCAPE DETAIL FROM THE EPIPHANY

one; she is just a Castilian peasant girl, sweet and simple but animated by a deep spirituality. The Child is a marvelous interpretation of the wild and crude children that may be encountered playing in the muddy streets of the small Castilian towns. His vigorous blessing of the old magus was indeed intentionally given by the artist, because its effect is reflected in the humble and almost frightened expression of the old man. St. Joseph, in accordance with traditional iconography, is represented as a mild man, surprised by the scene.

Also immediately noticeable is the marvelous quality of costume. Every detail of dress possesses a definite tactile quality. The velvet tunic of the old man, the soft garments of the Virgin and the rich gold brocade, reproducing a curious Venetian pattern, in which the second magus is arrayed, all are perfectly rendered. The simple robe of St. Joseph is well balanced by the elaborate green velvet jacket of the youngest king, embroidered with pearls and precious stones. Hats, shoes, gloves and other accessories are so well shown that this painting is actually a priceless document for the study of medieval clothing. From this point of view, the more we look at the painting, the more items of great interest may be discovered. Besides the elaborate study which the artist has made of the golden chalices brought as gifts to the Child, we remark

ELDER KING AND CHRIST CHILD, THE EPIPHANY

the perfect rendering of the rich belt holding the kneeling man's sword, in itself a handsome piece of armor. The meticulous jewel hanging from the neck of the Virgin is unbelievably beautiful, painted with gray and touches of gold over the deep blue of her tunic. We could describe many more details, such as the jewels adorning hats and robes and the embroideries which enrich the borders of mantles.

The color scheme of this group of figures is a most sensitive arrangement. The soft gray blue of the Virgin's mantle is a happy combination with her blue tunic, cleverly surrounded by the contrasting purple mantle of St. Joseph, the striking red of the old magus, and the orange curtain behind. The beautiful gray feathered hat held by the second king becomes an attractive chromatic center for the dark brocade of his mantle and the simple white cape of his standing companion. The whole effect is completed by a luminous landscape with hills flanking a river, with a picturesque castle and a distant town, in the same atmosphere as the destroyed porch of the ruined palace with its columns of rich and eternally shining marble and its broken roof and railing.

Fernando Gallego was certainly not a man of routine; his lyric imagination enlivened this much repeated scene with new details to make it more human. By his original and acute inter-

YOUNGER KING AND ST. JOSEPH, THE EPIPHANY

pretation, each personage acts in the most logical manner. In most Epiphanys, the present of the adoring king stands beside him, but here it is at first surprising to see the magus apparently with no present at all. If, however, we examine the scene closely, we perceive how realistically the second king offers his chalice to St. Joseph, who reaches for it with ready gesture. This means that the kneeling king has already presented his gift to St. Joseph—the artist's conception of the most natural sequence of action; and examination of the painting reveals that Joseph has carefully placed this present in the cupboard inside the palace. This amazingly human touch is enhanced by such other details as the second magus holding the hat of the elder king as he receives the blessing of the Holy Child. This gives an extraordinary equilibrium, seldom to be found in medieval painting, of realism of technique and realism of iconography. Every gesture, every feature is a perfect rhythm of technique and expression.

It would seem that this equilibrium was the real aim of the artist, who desired to endow each detail with appropriate life, as may be seen in the charming figures represented in the landscape—surprisingly enough again the three magi. Gallego probably intended this secondary scene as a representation of the kings lost on their search for the holy birthplace, and the revealing vision

of the Virgin and Child, in golden aura, appearing in the sky to guide them on their way. The old man prays devoutly on his knees, the youngest has left his clothes on a rock and is bathing in the river, and the middle-aged king is just removing his shoes, probably merely to wash his feet. It is entirely likely that the artist also intended to represent incidentally, the three ages of man, not only in the physical aspect of the three, but also in their observance of the old Spanish proverb, "When over forty, don't go swimming." Gallego indulged in these unusual iconographic details to free himself of such traditional items as camels and other impedimenta of a royal cortege, animals in the stable, and the other trite details always included in Epiphanys. This panel is, therefore, not only a great artistic monument, but an important chapter in the realistic Spanish iconography.

Dr. Post has devoted a long chapter in his book to Fernando Gallego, with a very fine analysis of his personality and work, and his influence on the Schools of Salamanca and Zamora. The name Gallego, meaning Gallician, may indicate the origin of this painter who was probably active during the last quarter of the fifteenth century. Post says, "He is the first Castilian painter in the Hispano-Flemish manner who answers to Ruskin's demand that an artist shall demonstrate his claim to the rank of a true master by the quantity as well as the quality of his output." He signed several paintings that in order of chronology are the Crucifixion in the Weibel Collection, Madrid; the Retable of St. Ildefonso in the Cathedral of Zamora; and the Triptych with a Madonna in the Cathedral of Salamanca. The most important works attributed to him for stylistic reasons are a fresco with astronomical themes in the Old Cathedral of Salamanca, painted between 1479 and 1493; the high altar of San Lorenzo at Toro, ca. 1500; the Retable in Santa Maria at Trujillo, painted soon after the latter; a Flagellation and Nativity in the Church of Campo de Peñaranda; a Coronation at Villaflores; the Epiphany belonging to the Toledo Museum of Art; and others.

Gallego's style is very close to that of his Flemish contemporary, Dirk Bouts. He was, however, not a servile imitator, as his works possess an unmistakable Iberian cast, which characteristic contributed to his sober color gamut of green, gray and soft blues. He was the greatest of the artists who worked in the Hispano-Flemish style.

This article was written for the Museum News by José Gudiol, Annual Professor in the Toledo Museum of Art, 1940-41.

STORM — JORGE CABALLERO

CHILEAN PAINTINGS AND SCULPTURE

TOLEDO and the Museum received nation-wide publicity during the recent exhibition of Chilean art, which was officially opened on March 26. Taking part in the ceremonies were the Chilean Ambassador, Senor Don Rodolfo Michels, Senor Don Domingo Santa Cruz, of the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Chile, Mr. John Abbott of the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, and in attendance were visitors from many museums and cultural institutions throughout the country. During a six weeks' showing the Exhibition attracted thousands of visitors. Eighteen of the works of art were sold to individuals and public institutions, among them the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and our own Museum.

One of the first Chilean paintings to be acquired by an American museum was purchased by the Toledo Museum in 1936 from the Carnegie International Exhibition. It was a Landscape by Roberto Humeres, who is prominently represented in the present Chilean show. His still life, Lilacs, showing one phase of the

AUTUMN ARMANDO LIRA

work of this versatile artist, who excels in portraiture as well, was chosen by the Museum for its collection. Humeres, like most of the artists included in the exhibition, is a young man, born in 1903. He has received many awards in his own country and has also exhibited in Europe and in the United States.

Another Still Life, rich in color, painted in fresh, spontaneous style, was also selected. It is the work of Luis Torterolo. Born in 1909, he studied at the School of Fine Arts, Santiago, and was represented in the Latin-American Exhibition at the Riverside Museum, New York, in 1939.

The landscapes showing the Chilean countryside were of especial interest to visitors and many of them were of outstanding quality. It was difficult to make a choice; finally three paintings were acquired, each distinctive in subject and workmanship.

A color scheme of yellow-greens characterizes the painting, Storm, by Jorge Caballero. In spite of its title it is a rather placid scene of gently rolling hills and quiet water. Contrast is offered by swaying trees against a cloud-massed sky, which occupies more than half the canvas.

SEAL IN REPOSE — BEATRIZ DANITZ

Autumn by Armando Lira shows another type of Chilean landscape, a village road leading to mountains in the distance. It is brilliant with the warmth of late summer sunshine. The muted though clear pinks, violets, greens and yellows must be typical of the country, since they appear frequently in varying intensities and tonalities in many of the canvases.

Similar color, more delicately used, is evident in the painting, Landscape in Spring by Carlos Pedraza, an attractive composition of houses set around a small park, centered by a fountain. Pedraza is a very young painter, born in 1913. He was awarded a First Prize in Painting at the Official Salon of Santiago in 1941.

Women artists were not overlooked in the Chilean Exhibition, many of them having attained high recognition both at home and abroad. Beatriz Danitz is especially talented in water color, her work showing freshness of coloring and mastery of design. Seal in Repose, purchased by the Museum, was one of three outstanding works by her in the Exhibition.

José Perotti, Commissioner General of the Exhibition, who made many friends during his stay in Toledo, is an exceedingly

able artist in many fields. Director of the School of Applied Arts of the University of Chile, he works in painting, sculpture, ceramics and enamel on metal, and has received many awards. Two of his works will remain in the Museum's collection. Still Life, a tempera painting, is notable for its subtle arrangement of shapes and colors. The bronze portrait head, Marta, shows Perotti's mastery of the plastic medium.

A fine beginning has been made for the formation of a collection of works by artists of the Western Hemisphere, which has interesting possibilities for expansion. There are many notable artists in the Latin-American countries little known to us. The Museum's Chilean Exhibition stimulated interest and curiosity, which should bear fruit for the future. We look forward to the return of our small Chilean collection at the close of the country-wide tour, when it will be placed in the galleries.

PICTURES PRESENTED TO SCHOOLS

AT THE close of the Chilean Exhibition awards were given to the three schools which made the greatest use of the Museum during its showing. Woodward High School, Washington and Lincoln Schools received beautiful enlarged photographs of Chilean scenes, suitable for hanging in classroom or corridor. The subjects were: La Moneda, the President's Palace, built about 1650; All Saint's Lake, one of the beauty spots of Southern Chile; and Fishermen in the Bay of Angelino, Puerto Montt.

THE GEORGE W. STEVENS SCHOLARSHIP

FRANCES SINNES, one of the Museum's outstanding students for the past five years in art history and appreciation as well as the creative arts of painting, clay modelling and crafts, was awarded the Stevens' Scholarship for the current year. Miss Sinnes received a Bachelor's degree in the College of Arts and Sciences of the University of Toledo and will continue her art studies in New York next fall. She has also received a Chilean government scholarship for a year's study in the University of Chile, Santiago, and expects to leave for South America early in 1943. One of her portraits was exhibited in the recent Toledo Artist's Show and she is especially interested in mural painting, having already worked in that field at the Holy Rosary Cathedral and assisting José Gudiol with the ceiling fresco for the chapel in the 1941 Spanish Painting Exhibition.

GIFT OF AN ITALIAN CHEST

THE MUSEUM has just acquired a fine Italian Renaissance chest as the gift of Mrs. Henry Goldman, New York, in whose collection was at one time our fifth century Greek head.

Chests were among the most important objects of furniture during the Renaissance, especially in Italy. They served first to transport the family belongings when a journey was made from winter residence in the city to the country home, much as our modern trunk. In the home they were used as chairs, tables and sometimes even to sleep upon, in addition to their usual function as storage place for household valuables. As chests became less frequently moved, they became more luxurious in decoration. Artists and craftsmen found in them an opportunity for adornment with polychrome painting, rich carving and intarsia of colored wood and of ivory.

Massive in size, made of walnut waxed to a deep, rich tone, the Museum's chest is of simple shape with decoration characteristic of the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century. Like the best examples of its period, its profile is architectural, with modest moulding at the base and outlining four panels which divide the front. Within these panels is a narrow border of inlay,—also seen around the entire chest—and a geometric motif filled with wood intarsia. Quatrefoil and diamond-shaped figures of light-colored wood form a pattern around the sides of the chest. The style of decoration would seem to indicate a North Italian origin, intarsia being a distinctive feature of many pieces from Venice and Lombardy.

The chest has been placed in the Rotunda, at home among other works of art of the Renaissance.

CHILD ART SHOWN IN SCOTLAND

AN EXHIBITION of the work of children from the School of Design was sent to the National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh, by request of its director. In his introduction to the catalogue, Mr. Stanley Cursiter, Director, says:

"The main purpose of this exhibition is to draw attention to the opportunities available to children in America under the educational policy adopted by many of the Galleries and Museums, rather than to illustrate the standards attained."

The exhibition was found to be of such interest that Major Alfred A. Longden of the British Council is arranging for its showing in a number of other museums of Great Britain.